

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): ~~Video~~ A video face detection apparatus in which a test image from a video sequence is compared with an image property model derived from image properties of a region detected to contain a face in a preceding image in said video sequence[[]], said apparatus comprising:

(i) a selector to select a predetermined proportion of pixels in said region detected to contain a face in said preceding image which most closely match said image property model derived in respect of that region, thereby deriving a pixel mask;

(ii) a comparator to compare pixels in said test image defined by said pixel mask with said image property model, said mask being applied at more than one image position within said test image; a face being detected in said test image at a mask position corresponding to a lowest average difference between said image property model and pixels defined by said mask at that position.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus according to claim 1, in which said image property model is a ~~colour~~ color model.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus according to claim 2, in which said ~~colour~~ color model is a Gaussian model of ~~colour~~ color distribution.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus according to claim 2, in which said ~~colour~~ color model represents a ~~colour~~ color distribution in at least a part of at least one image of said video sequence.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus according to claim 1, in which said mask is applied to said test image at positions within a test region surrounding the image position of said detected face in said preceding image.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus according to claim 5, in which said test region is a rectangular region.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus according to claim 1, in which said predetermined proportion is 50% of said pixels.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): ~~Video~~ A video conferencing apparatus comprising the apparatus according to claim 1.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): ~~Surveillance~~ A surveillance apparatus comprising the apparatus according to claim 1.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A video face detection method in which a test image from a video sequence is compared with an image property model derived from image properties of a region detected to contain a face in a preceding image in said video sequence[;], said method comprising the steps of:

(i) selecting a predetermined proportion of pixels in said region detected to contain said face in said preceding image which most closely match said image property model derived in respect of that region, thereby deriving a pixel mask; and

(ii) comparing pixels in said test image defined by said pixel mask with said image property model, said mask being applied at more than one image position within said test image; said face being detected in said test image at a mask position corresponding to a lowest average difference between said image property model and pixels defined by said mask at that position.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A computer readable medium encoded with a computer ~~Computer software having~~ program configured to cause a processor to execute code for carrying out a method according to claim 10 a video face detection method in which a test image from a video sequence is compared with an image property model derived from image properties of a region detected to contain a face in a preceding image in said video sequence, said method comprising the steps of:

(i) selecting a predetermined proportion of pixels in said region detected to contain said face in said preceding image which most closely match said image property model derived in respect of that region, thereby deriving a pixel mask; and

(ii) comparing pixels in said test image defined by said pixel mask with said image property model, said mask being applied at more than one image position within said test image; said face being detected in said test image at a mask position corresponding to a lowest average difference between said image property model and pixels defined by said mask at that position.

Claims 12-14 (Cancelled).